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Isomerism

AND

What Is Mind?

BY

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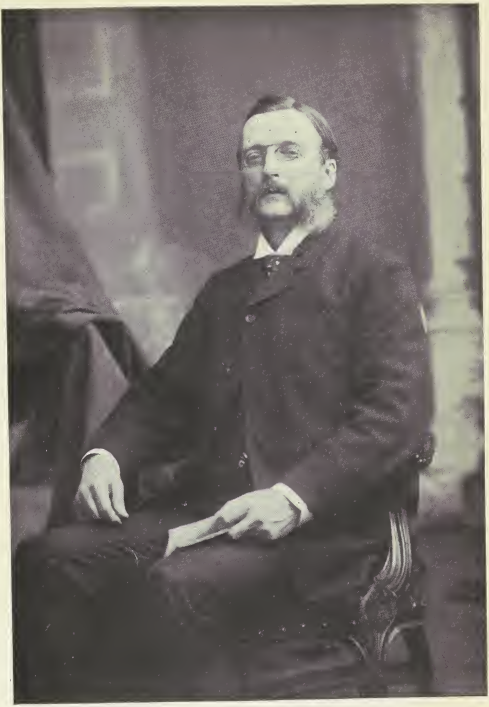

Yours truly
George W. Edgett

Isomerism

AND

What Is Mind?

Amid the infinite variety of things, inventions and thoughts that interest, please and profit mankind, there is nothing of more importance to know, and more delightful to study, than the constitution of nature, whose principles include all the facts of all the natural sciences.

The chief end or aim of man is happiness; and as the immortal Virgil most truly declares in one of his poems,

"*Happy the man who, studying Nature's laws,*
Through known effects can trace the secret cause,
His mind possessing in a quiet state,
Fearless of Fortune, and resigned to Fate."

In view of all this, it is truly amazing that people who barely know the A, B, C of facts in natural philosophy should spend all their leisure time in games, sports, dissipations, and works of fiction.

The lazy and ignorant, who wish to avoid mental work, or to escape from all bother into the beatitude of peaceful rest, will tell us it is what we know that *troubles* us — not what we don't know. Now in respect to this partially true plea for ignorance, it may be said that the facts of human history, and even the direct works of nature itself, on the cruel or unfortunate side, are full of vicious, horrible features, which those people who are very wise would fain not know, try to ignore, and refuse to criticize, censure, or curse, as needless, malicious, unjust, tyrannical, and devilish.

And still further, the half-truth in that peculiar excuse, or defense of ignorance, gives a color of reason for thinking it would indeed be worse to know *everything* than to know little or nothing, because there is so great a multitude of revolting things, thoughts, miseries, social and religious vagaries, diseases, malformations, reptiles, insects, wars, scandals, crimes, frivolities, and mental leprosies in the pandemonium of the world's affairs that are better for us not to know than to know.

But these worthless, painful matters, some of which may find relief in science, form no necessary part of that great region to which we above refer; where the labor of research is pleasure, discovery a joy, and victory over problems a perpetual delight.

Inventive genius in the use of knowledge there finds, makes, and is its own reward in giving to the world it occupies the new-found blessings that we now enjoy.

How to find absorbing interest in some point or branch of study in this vast field is very easy to learn. For example: take a seed of inquiry, a nucleus of inquisitive thought, as to any old theory or dictum of authority, along with you into the woods, parks, or streets, and think it into growth for yourself by trial, by denial, by asking, Is that so? Is this true? and by finding, if possible, some better way to account for something than was known before.

You will make many mistakes, perhaps: may seem to disprove old axioms; may fail to find defects in argument, statement, or solution of questions; may come to some extreme point, like appearing to prove that nothings are unequal according to what they result from, or that 2 are equal to 4, as in the example of division here below stated:

$$40-40=80-80.$$

Divide each side of the equation by $20-20$ and you have $2=4$.

But in spite of all possible errors, keep at work trying to discover every defect of reasoning on any question you set out to examine, and you will then have begun to think subjectively, or not altogether by the objective action of other people's ideas, in which your own mind takes no active part, except as a recipient of supposed facts, without personal judgment or analysis.

And now we come to the first subject of our essay, which affords a good example of what we here recommend to improve the power of personal reason.

The practical chemist, as well as the ordinary observer of nature, who knows that every effect must have an adequate cause, may think it impossible that any one element alone, or elemental combinations which are just alike, can become things of different natures without the addition or removal of a material something, or somewhat, to cause their difference. Each one will declare, then, that such differentiation without such cause is quite as absurd as to say that things can be what they are and something else at the same instant of time.

So I am requested by an investigator to explain why or how it can be possible, as stated in "A

New Study of Nature," by me, that the oil of roses and properties of coal gas are made in equal quantities of the same elements,— four atoms of hydrogen and four of carbon making a compound atom of both.

This is indeed a puzzle that might make a man take off his coat, so to speak, and go to work in a chemical laboratory to make rose oil out of bituminous coal; or, still more profitably, in the same line, to make diamonds out of carbon or carbon gas like that of which they have been made by nature.

The above statement of doubt and denial as to possibilities may not be totally untrue, if considered as a question of dynamics, or as to the temporary action of force in material energies applied to things, although the chemistry of materials is utterly unable to show what is assumed to be a necessary addition or removal of an intrinsic something in order to differentiate things.

Now if the trials of a science fail to find the existence of what appears to be necessary for certain effects, we must resort to some other course of trials and observations to account for those effects or facts that we know.

Let us look, then, at the changes made in all sorts of materials by force of pressure, by light, heat, electricity, magnetism, etc., which are not analyzable as chemical ingredients in an allotropic element, or in elemental compounds. What do we find to be the result of pressure by means of muscular force, force of gravity, mechanical power, or otherwise? The density, quality, inherent molecular relations of metals, gases, and other things are all changed by the application of sufficient external pressure, which adds no physical substance, although it alters the character, forms and conditions of what it acts on.

By pressure, and also by friction, various elements and compounds are made to change in a most startling manner, quick as a flash, into things quite different from either one of their single or compound constituents. For instance: a little chlorate of potash and sulphur, mixed in a mortar, will retain their separate identity in mutual indifference until a slight pressure of the pestle makes them change, unite, and burn together with a loud explosion.

Phenomena like this also appear in gases. For example: oxygen and hydrogen, mingled in right portions for combustion, will not unite chemically until a spark of fire is applied to them, when they rush together, with a crash like thunder, to become the supreme liquid,— water.

The process, means, and mediums of limitless variability, by which such or similar effects are slowly or quickly made in a variety of elements, through vital evolution and otherwise, afford a practical solution of many queries as to diversity of colors, qualities and odors in roots, leaves, flowers, oils and fruits of the same elemental composition. But while this view gives a proximate or practical solution of the problem before us, it does not explain away the necessity of a still more recondite principle than any one of those indicated.

To realize more closely what this statement means, consider the following example: why or how carbon and hydrogen, each one odorless, can make our choicest perfumes, as they do by their combination, is not possible to imagine or explain in any way except upon the basis of those symbols of chemistry which relate to isomerism, and which are supposed to designate or represent the diverse arrangements of atoms that make, become, or express different things and various qualities or perfumes.

In this way of evolutionary volition by structural relations and transfers, it is conceivable that effects and changes in the elements, like those we refer to, are determined by whatever is the ruling force in a diversity of influences. In respect to the creative mode of action so pursued, it is not unlike that by which our thoughts are made.

To exemplify the creative mystery outside of the isomeric miracle, see this: the union of scentless hydrogen and nitrogen makes the pungent ammonia, and noxious chlorine unites with the brilliant metal, sodium, to create common salt, or chloride of sodium. It is quite plain that all such innumerable changes are at least partly due to the peculiar inherent characters and chemical affinities of the various elements; but those traits and affinities themselves, whether they can exist by virtue of diverse atomic arrangement, apart from the *vis viva* of other energies, or not, are not traceable by physical science to any complete cause, manner, or means of their production without the assumption of principles in nature analogous to those conceived of in human mentality.

To return, however, to the pursuit of known facts in regard to effective energies that may partially, if not fully, account for isomerism: it is found that heat, by developing the action of affinities, by melting, liquefying, or evaporating minerals and other forms of matter, by its action on plants, by its union with sunlight, making the world's verdure, is a potent factor that helps transform things into a diversity of states, forms, conditions and characters.

And what shall we say of light, that weird worker in a million forms of color on the floral leaves, the supreme artist of the universe, that gives the eye of bird, beast, man, both the means of sight and a living picture of magnificence! Spirit intangible, whose touch of energy transmutes the color, feature, tone, and quality of things, can you give us no portion of the almighty key that will disclose how the perfume of a rose may be made of coal-gas, or how both are made of hydrogen and carbon in equal atomic measures?

For other examples of isomerism, or metameric compounds, let us note these: gum-arabic and sugar consist of the same elements in the same proportions; "the venom of a rattlesnake is isomeric with the whites of eggs;" and there are about twenty volatile or essential oils that are pure hydrocarbons, each one of which is known by chemistry as $C_{10}H_{16}$. Among these are the oils of lemon, cloves, juniper, birch, black pepper, ginger, bergamot, oranges, and turpentine. And, moreover, all sorts of vegetable albumen, which furnish the inception of animal nutrition, are isomeric and convertible.

On this matter of diversified changes, both in isomeric products and other things, electricity is another effective power in evidence; for it assists the alteration of things, as pressure, heat, and light do, and is likewise not an essential part of things that are changed by it. Like heat, it dissolves and also enforces chemical combinations. It vivifies, forms, and destroys, shatters solid formations by a thunderbolt, decomposes things, transposes inherent atoms and their relations, moves external particles from place to place, from one thing to another, as in electroplating, and makes the electric effect of all electrical machinery on earth.

For an example of another kind of occult power, which appears to be no more than a formative principle in the nature of things; there is an elective, magnetic influence, or molecular polarity, which has made the diversified forms of crystalloids in just the same way it now directs the growth of multiform, artistic, symmetrical crystals from solutions of crystalloids, when properly treated by experiment.

Is it not made plain by these brief statements of a few facts, which are verifiable by experiment or observation, that there is an effective sufficiency of energies, unknown to us by physical chemistry as being different substances, to account for the change or transmutation of elemental natures, without new supply, addition, or removal of what can be known as physical materials united in things themselves? If so, then isomerism and the isomeric phenomena of nature are explained, so far as it is made to appear certain what principles of force are necessarily engaged in the performance of their miracles.

The various conditions of any single, distinct element which is called allotropic may be accounted for in the same way as above detailed in regard to the problem of isomerism.

And, moreover, if the one case here in question at the outset, and many other isomeric examples like it, prove the mastery of those energies we refer to, in their use of elemental materials, making different things out of the same compound, and *vice versa;* is it not most reasonable to suppose that all things of which we know, not excepting the physical functions and mental faculties by which things are known, are the result of perpetual changes effected by such energies, assisted by the powers of appetency, natural selection, chemical affinity, repulsion and catalysis, which are modes of action in matter not unlike what we are conscious of as volitions of mind?

And, still further, judging by what science has been able to demonstrate, may not this statement be accepted for a fact: could we trace the course, process, and cause of changes in nature during a long time back, or from forty million years ago downward, through the mazes of evolution, it would still appear, as it now does, that all extents and states of matter are made to differentiate and develop into other conditions, and from these to become others, or what they were before, by force of those energies referred to, whether they act in any manner definable as volitions of a mental nature, or otherwise.

Having before suggested in various ways that the principles of our mental action and the principles of action in nature at large are the same, it now appears that we have arrived at a proper point of view to consider that most abstruse problem of all ages: —

WHAT IS MIND?

It is very easy to define mind as the entire spiritual nature and faculties in man, by which he thinks, imagines, judges, reasons, remembers, wills, rejoices, regrets, hopes, and fears; but this neither expresses nor gives any perception, cognition, or conception of how mind is made or constituted—either as being an especial or distinct kind of matter, or as being a combination of motions made by the persistent activities of force engaged in physical action.

A closer approach than is commonly made toward the actual fact of what mind is may be arrived at by assuming it to be the action of force, through matter and in union with it, directed and diversified by the use of a limitless variety of conditional means and influences.

The egotism of man has made him imagine that he is the chief object of all creation, and so it has made the ordinary definition limit mind to man alone. The absurdity of this limitation, as a probable or known fact, is quite apparent when we realize that force, motion, impulse, and the primal or ultimate being of matter, and also certain modes of their mutual action, of which human mind is indubitably one, are not knowable as things perceptible in direct cognition, whether within a human body or beyond it.

It follows from this that there is no more reason to suppose an ethereal, supersensible substance in man, which we call mind, than to suppose it in the universal extension of nature at large; inasmuch as it is equally unknown as such substance in both cases. And this statement as to limit or extent is also true in regard to mind conceived of as nothing else but the actions of force in union with matter.

The foremost reasoners in mental science have concluded that mind is unknowable, not only in respect to being a distinct something of substance beyond the appearance of phenomena, but also as to being a certainty of any other possible conception, however it may appear in evidence by what it performs.

Now in any or in every sense of the word "knowing," as applied to what we think we know and are conscious of, is this conclusion altogether true?

As to mind in man, the self-conscious knowledge of its own existence in action, which admits of no denial, is absolute proof to itself that it does exist, although it affords no apprehension of mental matter as a perceptible, sensible, tangible fact. In this respect, then, mind is certainly not knowable; though in many other respects, and as other characteristics of potentiality in physical action, it is known.

In this regard, mind is the same as other principles which we say are well known, although never knowable as distinct, sensible, perceptible matter, simply because, like mind, they do not so exist, or do not exist in such mode, perceptibly to our senses.

Force of gravity, electricity, light, heat, sound, magnetism, chemical affinity, and catalysis are examples of this state of facts. And to pursue the parallel of their likeness to attributes of mind, let us observe this: contrary to the old opinion that such energies of force are different kinds of matter, it is now said to be proved by dynamics, or by the experimental researches of reason and science, that they are only different modes of the motion and transfer of inscrutable force in, through, and by means of common matter.

This theory of process in the production of such various energies and their phenomena, by the same eternal force in diversity of action, perfectly agrees with our assumption as to how mind is made and constituted, both in a universal and personal mode of being.

To consider similarity by the absence of qualities which things of palpable substance have, let us note that those energies referred to, like the attributes and varieties of mind, have no distinctive qualities such as color, odor, taste, form, or tangibility; and if we say of mind that it is not ponderable, and does not fill spaces like all kinds of material things, the same may be said of those energies; for they are likewise imponderable, and occupy or fill no space in exclusion of material bodies.

A scientific spiritualist once constructed a most delicate system of scales, and tried every known means, aided by chemistry, to prove the pressure of a spirit presence, or a power of mental force, that could show an effect upon the scales, or in chemical action. But no effect was ever thus producible; and so he concluded that what we call a spirit, soul, or mind is so far a non-entity that it can never become manifest in that way.

In connection with an argument on the possibility or probability of mind in nature at large, or as being a rational combination of principles at work in universal action, Herbert Spencer declares: "The only thing which any one can know as mind is the series of his own states of consciousness; and if he thinks of any other mind than his own he can think of it only in terms derived from his own."

Very well, then let us think of mind in the operations of nature, for a moment, by such mental derivatives; and if these terms find or afford parallels of action in the personal and impersonal principles of nature, then, so far at least as such likeness or sameness holds true, there are principles of mind in the impersonal state the same as in the personal form.

Therefore, to advance this theory toward a more evident certainty of truth, it is only necessary to continue tracing as far as possible the analogy, likeness, and sameness of what we have in ourselves, compared with the powers, traits, and characteristics of action in all nature outside of ourselves.

If all the traits and features of human mind were, abstractly, as the nothingness of motions, shadows, and reflections, in relation to those things by which they are made, it would be no less certain that man is verily the world's epitome,— a mental and physical microcosm that embodies the countless views, motions, changes, transfers, principles in conflict, and modes of chemistry in nature. He is a book of records, cyclopedia of all the ages, a gallery of living pictures, chemical laboratory, machine repair-shop, electric plant, a living engine, a miracle of self-moving force, the supreme of animals,— the personalized concentration of attributes and things from nature at large, which must certainly have become what he is by virtue of evolutionary principles.

But in spite of what so appears, the impersonal extension of those powers and things, together with all other things and principles in action, is denied the possibility of any conceivable, knowable, or probable existence as mind, or as being "a single series of states of consciousness," by the reasoning of Mr. Spencer on this subject.

Let us examine this view of that most eminent philosopher. Speaking of mind in reference to the supposed non-existence of it as a unity in the totality of nature, he says: "When divested of all those attributes by which it is distinguished, the conception of it disappears — the word 'mind' stands for a blank."

This is the same as saying, When divested of all its meaning as known and commonly defined, the word "mind" stands for nothingness in relation to all we knew of what it meant. So the above statement is no less true than to say of numbers, — Ten minus ten equals naught.

But inasmuch as things, modes of nature, states of being, and mentality do not depend for their existence upon being known, if the premises of Mr. Spencer are all true, they afford no shadow of answer to the question, Is mind *no more* than conditions of consciousness? — no more than motion, memory, thought, in the series of conscious mental states? or is it also the all-pervading, all-embracing union of impersonal powers?

Conceived of as existing only in conscious states of physical being, when the individual is temporarily or permanently made unconscious by sleep, or otherwise, mind is lost; and by this conception, if all living things became extinct, if the universe were to lose all the conscious existence of organic life, there would be no mind in the whole universe.

Reasoning from what we know objectively, and in connection with this, from his own premise of "the only thing which any one knows as mind . . . ," Mr. Spencer refers to the infinite diversity of things and actions in nature, and claims that they are not the effects of mind, so far as possible to know or rational to conceive.

For evidence of this he refers to "the various winds and the dissolving clouds they bear, the currents of all the rivers, the grinding action of all the glaciers, the infinity of processes *simultaneously* going on in all plants that cover the globe, from polar lichens to crowded tropical plants, and the millions of quadrupeds that roam among them, and the millions of insects that buzz about them." He refers to "the motions of the multitudinous stars through space, the revolutions of all their planets round them, the infinitude of different processes and changes everywhere going on;" and he concludes it to be an unthinkable proposition that mind, or "a single series of states of consciousness," can exist as cause, in all the distinct sets of things and changes "throughout a space that baffles imagination."

In the whole course of his argument, however, he does not deny the possible existence of what is impossible to know — the possible being of mind in modes of united action beyond all rational conception, beyond all human power to represent or symbolize; but he simply affirms: "If I am asked to frame a notion of mind, divested of all those structural traits under which alone I am conscious of mind in myself, I cannot do it."

By "structural traits" he means, of course, the bodily powers, and those brain faculties treated of by phrenology, all of which depend for individuated existence upon physical forms and organic structures.

From the whole statement, if taken for a fact, comes the inevitable, final decision that mind, as a unity of action in nature at large, or as a directive intelligence of force bodiless, is not possible to imagine, represent, symbolize, or think into any certain, consistent, rational conception.

This conclusion is not atheism, but simply a confession of man's utter incapacity to comprehend the union of subject and object, cause and effect, matter and mind, force and motion. It declares no more than the utter inability of man to think or know the uniting principle and mode of omnipotent combinations which constitute the universe; and yet it implies the positive denial of any supreme being of personal mind, *such as any one in the whole world has ever fancied, supposed, or believed that he knew.*

If Mr. Spencer's view and these explanatory sequences derived from it are assumed to be true, then whoever thinks and believes that he knows the Christian principle, moral character, intrinsic nature, and mode of elemental and mental omnipotency is deductively an atheist; because such belief amounts to a denial of the Unknowable. So, on account of the presumptuous self-conceit of it, some one has said, "To believe that God is what any one can think him to be is blasphemy."

And this is quite true, if it be a fact that no one can know anything beyond what he has in himself mentally and physically, or in "a series of states of consciousness;" because in this case such belief implies, signifies, or assumes the reduction of Deity to human conception, or to nothing more than what man is, which is highly derogatory to the greatness of supreme power.

It was probably after a course of reasoning similar to the above when Spinoza said, "To define God is to deny him." The most rational meaning of this deep paradox is,— to define God is to discredit or deny the indefinable nature and the infinitude of inscrutable attributes.

In refutal of the above implication or deduction of Christian atheism, perhaps the best that can be said is this: to define, and by so doing to deny any variety of opinions about a fact, thing, principle, or mind unknown, is not to deny the fact, principle, or mind itself, but only the opinion of it, or what is thought about it.

And, moreover, it ought to be borne in mind along the changes of advance, or as we come to know more and more of what we strive to define, that every view, statement, theory, judgment, or faith, as to an ultimate reality of mind or Deity, is no more than simply a conception of definition in relation to features of nature which seem to verify the hypothesis of a supreme mentality of force.

Opinions, notions, fancies, and dreams of superstition acquired from books and teachers, or inherited from conditions of savage life; the imaginary things, characters, and scenes of fiction; the myriad of gods imagined in the past, which ignorance assumed to know and propitiate with bloody sacrifice,— all these nothings differ from positive realities, as the insubstantial visions of dreamland differ from a demonstrated fact of Euclid in geometry, such as, "The three angles of a plane triangle are equal to two right angles."

By this may be seen the difference between truth proved by reason and the senses, and any unprovable hypothesis assumed in order to account for things which appear to prove the necessity of what such hypothesis represents as a cause.

And now, after this brief review and pursuit of theory which culminates in the question of there being a universal mind, let us return to our own premises and theory of mind as being the infinitely diversifiable action of force and its various energies in matter, which are hereinbefore described, indicated, or proved by isomerism to be engaged in all the operations of nature, in a manner of reciprocal control, subjection, and unity, the same as in a human body or a human mind.

If there is ever to be a positive, rational, true conclusion in respect to the nature of mind, as faculties of man or beyond them, it must be arrived at on the basis of reasoning by what we can know, and not by *a priori* reasoning from a visionary hypothesis or assumption of omnific principles unknowable, separate, and distinct from the material universe.

By the atomic, corpuscular, world-wide and universal action of force; by means of analysis and synthesis through dynamics, chemistry, and physiology; by the manifest motivity of matter in all the ways of living evolutions; by the persistent study of motives and motive powers, which incite to action, make and multiply our thoughts; by the infinitesimals of mathematical fluxions, whereby is proved to be no end conceivable in the division of common matter into ethereal states subtilizable *ad infinitum;* — by all these means of reasoning we ought to arrive at a certainty of truthful inference that mind is not limited to animal life, or is not merely the transitory "series of states of consciousness" in man; but that all the attributes of all action, with the formative and destructive power, the motions, transfers, mutations, energies, and subtilizations of matter, constitute the nature of mind, whether they become an individualized union in the formation of a human being, or continue in the free extension of force outside the limitation of physical functions in organized life.

This conclusion, if so derived by the collection of facts, will give to the investigator a *rational* view in regard to the hypothesis or notion of omnipresent, impersonal, infinite mind with an infinity of resources.

And although we certainly know it is utterly impossible, from the nature of our mental limits, to comprehend or to frame any true and logical conception of such absolute being, or absolutely free mentality, exempt from individual conditions, yet we do know one mode of omnipresence, so far as effect can prove the nature of an adequate cause. This mode is the force of gravity that moves the universe and must necessarily be everywhere present in transmissive action through the field of space, as it is in all things that are visibly material. And whether it acts through space, which is miscalled void or empty space, by means of such ethereal subtilty of matter as we suppose to be the means of transmitting light through interstellar spaces, or is itself an effective sufficiency of substance in action, is a question that does not touch the manifest fact of its necessary ubiquity.

Other principles or faculties of nature which are not so broadly demonstrated as this one also afford some inferential proof for the supposed infinitude, or complete pervasion, of absolute substance.

Next to gravity, in relation to manifest evidence as to the limitless diffusion of supersensible matter, is starlight, which is thought to be made to appear by the infinitesimal motions of an ethereal substance pervading space.

Science has rigorously established some facts about light which are beyond human power to realize in perception or thought, as in the following examples:

To produce red light requires 39,000 ethereal wave-motions in the space of one inch; and violet color appears in 57,500 waves per inch.

Light moves 192,000 miles per second. Figure this distance into inches, and multiply the number of inches by 39,000, and you will have the number of waves which stream into the eye with 192,000 miles of light each second when you look upon a red color.

When by telescope you behold violet light made by sun-stars many trillions of miles away, in one millionth part of one second of time 699,494,400 waves of light have struck upon the retina of vision!

Represented by the light they made a few or many years ago, the stars themselves are never seen; and they would continue to appear the same as now, in visible evidence, for a long time after their total destruction.

This brings us to the point of evidence aimed at with light, in respect to the infinite dilatation of matter, through which light is everywhere diffusible in space by direct and by reflective action.

The clinch of argument hereon is this: inasmuch as not one of our bodily senses can make conscious cognition of anything without the action of material cause, and since light from remote sun-stars would continue to be seen for several years after they became extinct, it follows, necessarily, that light must either be itself a substance, or the material effect of motions in universal substance.

In regard to which alternative of this deduction is true, it is now decided, from all the facts of scientific discovery, that the different dynamic phenomena called light, heat, electricity, magnetism, chemical force, etc., are not peculiar, distinct kinds of matter, but are made by force engaged in action with a diversity of agencies and motions which characterize or differentiate the power and the appearance of it.

So it again appears, as variously represented before, that the operative *vis viva* of all nature, in relation to modes and means of diverse conditional activity, is not unlike the human mind. So in respect to their diversified action, made and determined as hereinbefore described, or in respect to the conditionality of what we know as their faculties and energies, they are evidently the same.

And thus we are brought to the inevitable conclusion that mind is not only what every detail of our argument assumes it to be, but the all-comprising, supreme principle of principles in nature, personalized in man.

And now, after the end of this rationale of mind, let us view what intimates the possible continuance of our mental selfhood beyond the loss of bodily forms:

CHARMS OF SELFHOOD.

Hark! Ocean, here and there, has mingled
Billowy music with the voices of your love-life;
The cataract cannonades anew
The sensate air of raptured lovers,
As now once more you walk along the precipice.

Rivers, lakes, and bays have caught your image
On their smiling waves, and borne you softly in
Among green isles, where yet a joyous air
Delights in life along the waves of memory.
Relumed by might of all-possessive mind,
Mountains and gorgeous palaces are yours;
Yea, the great globe itself, by gift of God is thine.
In lights and shades, in hearts and dreams,
In scenes of vast Elysium,
So, picture after picture, moves
The gladsome panorama of a life well filled,
Where nature holds you pictured, as itself is held,
By which yourself may see yourself afar.
It may be forty years away —
All atoms of that body have been lost —
But still you feast along such life
By wondrous alchemy of mind, whereof
Ideas are, like flowers in bloom, like birds in air.
Forms and motions, scenery and friends appear,
Inwoven by your radiant threads of thought.
And in all these living ecstasies,
In all this glad fruition of a ceaseless past,
In all these melodies from youth to age,
That Fancy hears, beholds, or renders into song,
The supreme boon of use to age is this:
To save the spirit of perpetual youth;
To intimate a selfhood never lost;
To lighten sorrow with a conscious proof
That present grief will some way yield a joy,
As by-gone woes increase a present bliss;
To realize a precious world in self,
That grows more lovely than the world outside,
More rich in transport as the years roll by.

In spite of perpetual and total change of bodily materials, from childhood onward, the vast totality of mental effects is mostly kept of mind, in a way of records utterly inscrutable, ready to return past visions, as the records of a phonograph are ever ready to return the voices, words, and music of former times, when put in motion under right conditions. Unlike the phonograph, however, and apparently remote from the physical senses, those principles of action which preserve and recall the ideas, events, and objects of memory are no doubt the supersensible agencies of supreme mentality.

Bodiless creations formed of thought are therefore not dependent upon *objective* forms of tangible matter for their possible continuance in *subjective* existence.

In pursuance of this hopeful thought, and for the use of each to each of all our loved ones when the occasion comes, let me add these simple words of good cheer:

AFTER I'M GONE.

Mid the scenes of your mind-made glory,
In fulness of sunshine and song,
Oh, list to the music of heaven
I'll waft you forever along.

It will come on the flow of sweet fancies,
In loving, ineffable streams,—
Will touch you like kisses of angels,
And wrap you in beautiful dreams.

Or if musing, you ramble in sadness,
And grieve for your friend that is gone,

Go walk on the shore of the ocean
Till find you the spirit that's flown.

It will rise while you watch o'er the heaving
And tremulous breast of the sea,
If you listen, and catch a low whisper
I'll send on a zephyr to thee.

It may come in the accent of murmurs,
Or ripples of fanciful mirth —
That love, in the breath of a spirit,
So good for the sorrows of earth!

Oh, then, catch it and keep it, I pray you;
Let no wave take it far out to sea;
For I love you, my darling, I love you,
And will ever sing fondly to thee.

However completely incredible or absurd it may seem that mental personality can possibly survive the loss of bodily life, let us not be too dogmatic before the evidence is fairly complete on both sides.

Intelligent personality is made of the continued series of states of consciousness. It extends itself from present to past existence by means of conscious memory. And if the invisible extension of thought is no less a conditional reality of necessary substance than the visible extension of perceptible matter, then certainly

There are heights above Parnassus,
Beyond the flight of poesy,
Whereto our spirits may attain
To find more wondrous views of life
Than all philosophy has dreamed,
Or tried to blazon by the reach of words.

NOTICE.— If you desire a proposed volume of "Walks, Talks, Travels, and Essays," by the author of this present brochure, you may address him before publication, in care of Mr. J. H. Pierce, 274 State St., Boston, Mass.